

IN THE ABSTRACT:

The previously submitted abstract has been amended as set forth below. A clean version of the amended abstract is being submitted herewith on a separate sheet.

Amended Abstract

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An optical microcantilever has an optical waveguide for propagating light. The optical waveguide has a first side, a second side opposite to the first side, and a tip portion formed on the first side and at a free end of the optical waveguide. The tip portion ~~having~~ has a microscopic aperture. A reflecting film is disposed on the second side of the optical waveguide. A reflecting member forms part of the reflecting film and is disposed at the free end of the optical waveguide. The reflecting member ~~and~~ has a generally planar surface for reflecting light propagated by the optical waveguide and for guiding the reflected light towards the microscopic aperture to generate near-field light at the microscopic aperture.